The

THOREAU SOCIETY

BULLETIN

The Thoreau Society, Inc. is an informal gathering of students and followers of Henry David Thoreau. Albert Bussewitz, Milton, Mass., President; Robert Needham, Concord, Mass., Vice-President; and Walter Harding, State University, Geneseo, N.Y. 14454, Secretary-Treasurer. Annual membership, $2.00; life membership, $50.00. Address communications to the secretary.

BULLETIN ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN WINTER 1971

THOREAU'S USE OF THE HINDOOS

by David G. Hoch (University of Toledo)

In "Walking" Thoreau says that he has "heard of a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge."[1] He also points out that men need "a knowledge useful in a higher sense" and that "the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge treats its cattle [readers]" just like the "unnatural farmer" who feeds his cow on hay the year round.[2] In concluding this discussion of knowledge, Thoreau gives a definition of true knowledge by quoting from The Vishnu Purana: "'that is knowledge which is for our liberation:. . .all other knowledge is only the cleverness of an artist.'"[3] Nevertheless, Thoreau quotes from one of the Society's publications in Walden. I would like to point out here first a quotation from this source and second a possible quotation from the same work--The Library of Entertaining Knowledge, The Hindoos, which was published "Under the Superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" in London, 1834, 35.[4]

The first allusion to The Hindoos appears in the third paragraph of "Economy":

> I have travelled a good deal in Concord; and everywhere, in shops, and offices, and fields, the inhabitants have appeared to me to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways. What I have heard of Bramins sitting exposed to four fires and looking in the face of the sun; or hanging suspended, with their heads downward, over flames; or looking at the heavens over their shoulders "until it becomes impossible for them to resume their natural position, while from the twist of the neck nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach;" or dwelling, chained for life, at the foot of a tree; or measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars, the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one leg on the tops of pillars,--even these forms of conscious penance are hardly more incredible and astonishing than the scenes which I daily witness.[5]

The reference to the Brahmins (it is spelled with the h in The Hindoos) suffering from the heat of four fires while looking at the sun may be found in two places. First as a part of a long quotation from chapter vi of Sir William Jones' translation of the Institutes of Hindu Law: "'In the hot season, let him the [Sannyasi] sit exposed to five fires; four blazing around him, with the sun above.'"[6] The second--and the probable source of the reference--appears on the same page as Thoreau's quotation from The Hindoos. It is part of a passage quoted from Mill's History of British India (a work which was later given to Thoreau by Thomas Cholmondeley). Part of the passage is as follows: "'He [the Yogi] then rose, and stood on one leg, gazing stedfastly at the sun, while fires, each large enough, says the traveller, to roast an ox, were kindled at the four corners of the stage,.... He next bowed himself down in the centre of the four fires, keeping his eyes still fixed upon the sun.'"[7] I have italicized a portion of the above to indicate that it may also be the source of Thoreau's reference to the Brahmins' "standing on one leg on the tops of pillars." Though there is no reference here to pillars, Mill is quoted as saying that the devotions took place on "a quadrangular stage." A check of Mill reveals no reference to pillars similar to Thoreau's.

The sentence containing Thoreau's quotation of the source appears at the top of the same page in The Hindoos: "Others [Yogis], turning their heads over their shoulders to gaze at the heavens, remain in that posture until it becomes impossible for them to resume the natural position, while, from the twist of the neck, nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach."[8] The italics indicate the portion of the sentence quoted by Thoreau. Thoreau makes minor alterations in the portion of the sentence that he quotes changing "the natural position" to "their natural position" and dropping the commas after while and neck. The sentence in The Hindoos is a paraphrase of the following sentence from Mill: "Others, turning their heads to gaze at the heaven over their shoulder, remain fixed in that posture, till the head can no longer be restored to its natural position, and no aliment, except in the liquid state, can pass down their throats."[9] Mill is clearly the source for the sentence in The Hindoos, and Thoreau seems to be quoting The Hindoos.

The two remaining types of penance are cited on the pages following and preceding the sentence in The Hindoos. Penitents who chain themselves to trees for life are referred to in the following sentence in The Hindoos: "they chain themselves for life to the foot of a tree."[10] The similarity of Thoreau's paraphrase is obvious, I think. On the page preceding the quotation is the source of Thoreau's "measuring. . .the breadth of vast empires": "Some [Yogis] crawl, like reptiles, upon the earth for whole years, or until they have thus made the circuit of a vast empire. Others measure with their bodies the road to Jagannât'h. . ."[11] Thoreau's comparison of the penitents to "caterpillars" is perhaps more apt than the comparison to reptiles made in The Hindoos. This final reference is footnoted in The Hindoos to a work titled Oriental Memoirs.

A second possible use of The Hindoos in Walden can be seen in Thoreau's quotation of Calidasa's

Sacontala in the next to the last paragraph of "Spring." Referring to the "sulphur showers," Thoreau says, "Even in Calidas' drama of Sacontala, we read of 'rills dyed yellow with the golden dust of the lotus'" (II,351). The phrase Thoreau quotes here appears verbatim as a part of a longer passage concerning yoga quoted in The Hindoos from Sir William Jones' translation of the play.[12] Since this appears on the page following Thoreau's quotation of The Hindoos cited above, it is possible that he also took this phrase from the same source. Another coincidence is Thoreau's use of the spelling us for lotus instead of the os spelling used in the Jones translation of the play.[13] However, Thoreau may simply have changed Jones' spelling. Moreover, The Hindoos uses a k instead of a c in spelling Sacontala, while Thoreau follows Jones' spelling. Thoreau also quotes portions of the Sacontala not included in The Hindoos in such places as the "Monday" chapter of A Week (I, 183). He also charged the play out of the Harvard Library on January 28, 1850.[14] Thus, this quotation could easily have come from either source.

The tone of chapter x of The Hindoos is in keeping with Thoreau's use of the passage he quotes from it in "Economy." The writer of the chapter observes that some persons "imagine that by inflicting pain on themselves they can gain the favours of the Deity" and that many practitioners of penance are insincere and "the slaves of mere vanity."[15] Thoreau, of course, makes the same point in "Economy."

What other use Thoreau might have made of this two-volume "bale of hay" is open to conjecture and investigation. Certainly, Thoreau might have been interested in the author's reference to the Ghauts as the White Mountains in the first volume.[16] Moreover, the author's method seems to have been to collect quotations and paraphrases of the leading sources about India available to him. The work, therefore, provides an encyclopedia and a not always well-digested account of what was known about the Hindus in 1834. Thoreau seems, though, to have chewed some of this "hay" as well as the "grass" or true knowledge he speaks of in "Walking."

Notes

(1) Henry David Thoreau, Excursions (New York, 1962), p. 203.
(2) Excursions, pp. 203-204 passim.
(3) Excursions, p. 205; H. H. Wilson, trans., The Vishnu Purana (Calcutta, 1961), p. 115. This is a verbatim reprint of the London, 1840 edition.
(4) I have not been able to discover where Thoreau had access to The Hindoos. The fact that he owned at least three other books published by The Library of Entertaining Knowledge may be an indication of the wide circulation of books published under this imprint. See Kenneth Walter Cameron, Companion to Thoreau's Correspondence (Hartford, 1964), p. 85.
(5) The Writings of Henry David Thoreau (Boston, 1906), II, 4-5. Hereafter all parenthetical page references will be to this twenty volume collection. Quotations from Walden have been checked with Henry David Thoreau, The Variorum Walden, ed. Walter Harding (New York, 1963).
(6) The Hindoos (London, 1834, 35), II, 49. This quotation is from chapter vi verse 23 of Institutes of Hindu Law: or, The Ordinances of Menu. I do not find references to the other sorts of penance described in the passage from Walden in Menu.
(7) The Hindoos, II, 57.
(8) The Hindoos, II, 57, italics mine.
(9) James Mill, The History of British India, 4th ed., 9 vols. (London, 1848), I, 410. This edition contains notes and a continuation by Horace Hayman Wilson; however, Wilson has signed his notes so that Mill's text is reprinted intact. This is the edition of the work that Thoreau received from Cholmondeley.
(10) The Hindoos, II, 58.
(11) The Hindoos, II, 56.
(12) The Hindoos, II, 58.
(13) Sir William Jones, Works, 13 vols. (London, 1807), IX, 516.
(14) Kenneth Walter Cameron, "Books Thoreau Borrowed from Harvard College Library" in Companion to Thoreau's Correspondence, p. 289. Professor Cameron lists volume IX of Works, which I have cited above and which contains The Sacontala.
(15) The Hindoos, II, 44, 50.
(16) The Hindoos, I, 5.

University of Toledo

"Nothing goes by luck in composition. It allows of no tricks. The best you can write will be the best you are. Every sentence is the result of a long probation."
Thoreau's Journal -- 28 February 1841

REPORT OF THE WALKING SOCIETY: THE LIME QUARRIES
by Mary Fenn

Among the interesting sites along the Old Carlisle Road are the old lime quarries. They are a series of small excavations running, as Thoreau remarked, in a NE-SW direction, with a few more dotted here and there in the vicinity. Most of them are long narrow trenches - perhaps no wider than a dozen feet or so across and only two or three times that in length. The soft limestone was dug away from the harder granite, in some cases leaving a narrow dyke of the harder rock in the center of the excavation. Not far away is the cellar of the kiln with its earthen ramp, where carts were backed up and the ore dumped into the oven for burning. Brooks Clark told Thoreau, "He remembered when they began to burn lime there, and bought the right to get out stone of Easterbrooks more than sixty years ago. The lime sold for $5.00 a cask (larger casks than now). But the stone was difficult to get out." [Journal for Nov. 6, 1857] The lime was used for plaster.

It is very interesting today to see the pits and to examine the stone work of the kiln, and Thoreau found it so in his day. He said he was as interested in the discovery of lime as if it has been gold.

Not far from the quarries, in a northerly direction, is the Estabrook cellar hole. The farm belonged to one Thomas Estabrook and dates back to 1670. A few lilacs still grow at the doorstep and stone walls outline the various sections of the farmyard, although the entire area is now wooded. There was once a peach orchard on a gentle slope S.W. of the farmhouse. A later owner of the orchard, Jacob Farmer, had a crazy uncle [Journal June 27, 1860] who attempted to dig a hole to China in that area. He placed a large stone "just between him and the other side, not to be removed till he was ready to marry Washington's sister." Presumably he never did marry into the Washington family for the Walking Society, going from the Peach Orchard toward the Estabrook Place, came across a hole in the ground, pretty well filled in - with an exceptionally large flat stone lying in it.

Then, crossing the stone-wall-inclosed field toward the Estabrook cellar, we came upon a dozen or more stone circles - much in the nature of camp fires. The stones were lichen covered, indicating that they had been there for many a year. As usual, no one in Concord except one man who owned property in that area had ever seen them, and he had no idea what they were for.

It wasn't until we met a mining engineer the following summer that we learned that such stone circles were used in a very ancient method of burning the acids out of the lime and rendering it usable for plastering. The ore was piled within the circle with wood burned on top, a process which predated the use of a kiln.

Had Thoreau ever seen these stone circles? Presumably not, for it seems logical to assume that he would have mentioned them. The woods had grown up in that field as long ago as his day, and it would be easy for even an alert eye like his to miss the stones. But there they are - a very interesting remnant of a primitive process of life in old Concord.

"Public opinion is a weak tyrant compared with our own private opinion. What a man thinks of himself, that is which determines, or rather indicates his fate." HDT - Walden

TO THE EDITOR:

Although more than half a year has passed since July 11, 1970, the memory of the emotion-torn Thoreau Society Annual Meeting remains fresh. Those of us who were there remember the unsettled atmosphere that morning; the rumors of picketing, and the not-so subconscious fears of the violence that accompanies so many demonstrations today. When handbills headed "A Protest Against the Thoreau Society's Annual Meeting" appeared, a natural instinct for those who had travelled many miles to attend the meeting would have been a defensive one -- "Why protest against me and my group? Has it now become necessary to tear asunder the peaceful meetings of a literary group?"

These initial fears and defensiveness appeared later within the church hall. A tension hung over the meeting through the Call to Order and Official Greetings. It was almost a relief when Dr. Charles White requested consideration by the Society of his "new business". Yet the reaction of the majority of the Society was one of fear driven determination not to hear, not to listen, not to confront, not to consider. Vice-President Needham's decision to press forward to the preplanned business at hand, presentation of Sr. Vladimir Munoz and the addresses for the day, was if not totally popular, at least eminently practical.

Ironically, Dr. Carl Swanson's address seemed particularly in tune with the points made in Dr. White's "Protest", and led once again to a request for serious consideration of the handbill. This was literally shouted down. A hand count revealed 83 opposed to consideration, 44 in favor. The meeting ended on schedule at 12 noon with few people satisfied; those who were opposed to Dr. White's points were upset at the disruption of the meeting by "new business", those in favor were upset by the inflexibility of the meeting.

Vice-President Needham made an important point from the podium; unless an item is proposed to and considered by the Board of Directors at their meeting the night before the open meeting, it should not be considered in open meeting. Yet the time and place of this meeting is not widely publicized. One reason for this ruling is that time is so short. Yet of twelve hours of scheduled activity, only one and one half are devoted to the business meeting, and this time includes the main speaker and presentations. Would it not be possible for some provision to be made for last minute business to be considered? Since the Society meets for only one day out of 365 would it not be possible to create some time for real interaction of members other than supervised strolls and sherry parties?

As a young man frequently told by my elders that the democratic process is the foundation of a safe and progressive society I was appalled by the reluctance of our Society to discuss, to argue, to represent our own beliefs and consider the problems of our times. After all, is there really any difference between a long hair screaming from the street and a white hair screaming from the balcony of the Trinitarian Congregational Church?

H. Nicoll Hoppner
14 Myrtle Avenue
Penn Yan, New York

"We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep."
HDT - Walden

ADDITIONS TO THE THOREAU BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . WH

Bode, Carl. "Thoreau and the Borrowed Reeds" in R. Browne & D. Pizer, eds., THEMES AND DIRECTIONS IN AMERICAN LITERATURE. Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue Univ. Press, 1969. pp. 58-68

BOSTON SEMI-WEEKLY ADVERTISER. "Mr. Herbert's Translations." Sept. 29, 1849. Includes a commentary on Thoreau's translation of Aeschylus. Reprinted in EMERSON SOC. QUART., 59 (1970), 21.

Bradley, Sam. "Up Walden Way," NEW YORK TIMES. Oct. 2, 1970. Poem.

Cameron, Kenneth Walter. CONCORD HARVEST: PUBLICATIONS OF THE CONCORD SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE WITH NOTES ON ITS SUCCESSORS AND

OTHER RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH IN EMERSON, THOREAU, ALCOTT AND THE LATER TRANSCENDENTALISTS. Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1970. 2vols. $35.00.

-----.,ed. CONTEMPORARY DIMENSION: AN AMERICAN RENAISSANCE LITERARY NOTEBOOK OF NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS ON . . . THOREAU . . . AND OTHERS. Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1970. $20.00.

Davies, Barrie. "Sam Quixote in Lower Canada: A Reading of Thoreau's A YANKEE IN CANADA," HUMANITIES ASSOCIATION BULLETIN, XX (Fall, 1969), 67-77.

Derleth, August. RETURN TO WALDEN WEST. New York: Candlelight Press, 1970, 233pp. Sequel to novel WALDEN WEST with incidental comments on Thoreau.

Downs, Robert B. "Resistance to Civil Government" in BOOKS THAT CHANGED AMERICA. New York: Macmillan, 1970. Revision of an earlier essay.

Emans, Elaine. "The Cloud Baggers," THOREAU JOUR. Q, 2 (Oct. 15, 1970), 10. Poem on Thoreau.

Emerson, Edward. HENRY THOREAU AS REMEMBERED BY A YOUNG FRIEND. Folcroft Press, 1970. $10. (Note: the Thoreau Lyceum has issued the same for $3!)

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. THE JOURNALS AND MISCELLANEOUS NOTEBOOKS OF. Vol. VIII (1841-1843). Ed. by W. Gilman & J. Parsons. Cambridge: Harvard Univ., 1970. 618pp. $18.50. Another volume in this monumental series with frequent comment on Thoreau (though one should note that only about half the Thoreau entries are listed in the index under Thoreau--the rest are listed under "Emerson, Ralph Waldo: Index Headings and Topics: Thoreau" --surely an awkward way of doing it.) But, nonetheless, despite this small flaw, this volume, as with the others in the series, is absolutely indispensable to any student of Thoreau and his times. Incidentally, an entry by Emerson (p. 240) indicates that the poem "When the oaks are in the grey," attributed to Thoreau is instead a local proberbial saying.

Ferguson, Henry N. "Nonconformist of Walden Pond." UNITY. Aug. 1968. pp. 19-24.

Fleck, Richard F. "Thoreau and the Mystic Lore of Cape Cod," CONCORD SAUNTERER, 5 (Dec. 1970), Sup.

-----. "Thoreau and the Mystic Lore of Wildlife," DEFENDER OF WILDLIFE NEWS [2000 N. St.,N.W., Wash.,D.C.], 45 (Fall, 1970), 322-324.

Ford, Arthur L. THE POETRY OF HENRY DAVID THOREAU. Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1970. $10. Reprinted from ESQ.

Hamblen, Abigail Ann. "Laddie: Journal of an Indiana Thoreau," JOUR. OF POPULAR CULTURE, 4 (Summer, 1970), 85-89. Gene Stratton-Porter & HDT.

Harding, Walter. "Civilized Disobedience," Trans. into Jap. by Koh Kasegawa. SHI TO SAMBUN [Tokyo], 22 (Nov. 1970), 41-48.

-----. "Thoreau: The Camper in the Back Yard" in Charles Mee, Jr., Ed., HORIZON BEDSIDE READER. New York: American Heritage, 1970. pp. 204-221. Reprinted from HORIZON.

Hooper, Peter. "Homage to Thoreau" in FRAGMENTS. Christchurch, N.Z.: Designprint Press, 1970. A poem.

Inge, M. Thomas. "Thoreau's Enduring Laugh," THOR. JOUR. Q., 2 (Oct. 15, 1970), 1-9.

Jones, Samuel Arthur. PERTAINING TO THOREAU. Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1970. $10. Reprint.

Kamp, Anton. "Forever Walden," NEW ENGLAND HOMESTEAD, 142 (July, 1969), 26-27.

Lane, Lauriat, Jr. "The Structure of Protest: Thoreau's Polemic Essays," HUMANITIES ASSOC. BUL., 20 (Fall, 1969), 34-40.

-----. "Thoreau's WALDEN, I, Paragraphs 1-3," EXPLICATOR, 29 (Dec. 1970), 35.

Lesser, Peter. A. "Thoreau as Teacher and Educationist." Unpub. M.A. thesis. Univ. of Sussex (England), 1970.

Mattfield, Mary S. "Thoreau's Poem #189: An Emended Reading," CEA CRITIC, 33 (Nov. 1970), 10-12.

Meltzer, Milton & Walter Harding. A THOREAU PROFILE. Magnolia, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1970. $5.00 Hardcover reprint.

Mungo, Raymond. "Another Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers" in TOTAL LOSS FARM. New York: Dutton, 1970, pp. 15-53. Revision of ATLANTIC MONTHLY essay.

NEWS FRONT, Editors of. "The Gentle Rebel of WALDEN," in THE GREAT INNOVATORS. New York: Year, Inc., 1970. pp. 70-73.

Noverr, Douglas A. "Thoreau's 'May Morning':Nature, Poetic Vision, and the Poet's Publication of His Truth," THOR.JOUR.Q., 2 (July 15, 1970), 7-10. Correction of earlier entry.

Page, H.A. [A.H.Japp]. THOREAU: HIS LIFE AND AIMS. Folcroft, Pa.: Folcroft Press, 1970. Reprint.

Perrin, Noel. "A Little Inflation at Walden Pond," TRUE, 52 (Jan. 1971), 57-60. Reprinted from the NEW YORKER.

Poger, Sidney. "Thoreau's 'Resistance to Civil Government," THE LEAFLET, 69 (Feb. 1970), 11-16.

Reger, William. "Beyond Metaphor," CRITICISM, 12 (Fall, 1970), 333-344. Symbols in WALDEN.

Riepe, Dale. THE PHILOSOPHY OF INDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON AMERICAN THOUGHT. Springfield, Ill: Charles Thomas, 1970. Thoreau, pp. 39-45 et passim.

Rosenthal, Bernard. "The DIAL, Transcendentalism, and Margaret Fuller," ENGLISH LANG. NOTES, 8 (Sept. 1970), 28-36. Much on Thoreau & DIAL.

Sagoff, Maurice. "Walden" in SHRINKLITS. New York: Doubleday, 1970. p. 74. Poem.

Schatter, Antje. "Interpretationem sum Aufbau von Henry David Thoreaus WALDEN," LITERATUR IN WISSENSCHAFT UND UNTERRICHT, 1 (1968), 205-216.

Smythe, Daniel. "Thoreau and Robert Frost," THOR. JOUR. Q., 2 (Oct. 15, 1970), 21-22.

Spiegel, Marshall. "A Thoreau Look at Cape Cod," SCHOLASTIC VOICE (50 W. 44th St., NYC), 49 (Jan. 11, 1971), 2-5.

Stein, William Bysshe. "The Hindu Matrix of WALDEN: The King's Son," COMP. LIT., 4 (Fall, 1970), 303-319.

Thoreau, H.D. THE ANNOTATED WALDEN. Edited by Philip Van Doren Stern. New York: Clarkson Potter, 1970. 502pp. $10.95. One of the most interesting editions of WALDEN yet published. The text is reproduced in facsimile from the first edition, but it is supplemented by hundreds of notes and illustrations and by extensive quotations from passages Thoreau deleted as he was working on various drafts of WALDEN, some of which have never been published before. (Lyndon Shanley, the authority on the WALDEN manuscripts and texts, however warns that Stern's reading of these is not always accurate.) In addition there are a 50-page introductory essay and a 92-page chronology of Thoreau's life--by far the most detailed ever published. The many illustrations are superb.

-----. REFLECTIONS AT WALDEN: SELECTED WRITINGS. Ed. by Peter Seymour. Photographs by Francis Rogers & David Scherman. Kansas City, Mo.: Hallmark Editions, 1968. 62pp.

-----. SPRING AT WALDEN: SELECTIONS FROM THE JOURNALS. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1970. Privately printed. Limited to 500 copies.

Thoreau, Henry David. THE WIND THAT BLOWS IS ALL THAT ANYBODY KNOWS. Edited by Rod McKuen. Photos by Helen Miljakovich. Los Angeles: Stanyan Books, 1970.

Tidler, Charles. "Transcending the Sublime Henry David," NEW: AMERICAN & CANADIAN POETRY [Trumansburg, N.Y.], Sept. 1970. pp. 30-31. Poem.

Whisnant, David. "The Sacred and the Profane in WALDEN," CENTENNIAL REVIEW (Mich. State Univ.), Summer, 1970.

We are indebted to the following for information used in this bulletin: M.Ames,H.Adel,A.Brooks,A.Butler,L. Ball,T.Bailey,R.Borst,T.Balaam,M.Campbell,H.Cahoon, J.Donovan,R.Fleck,F.Flack,F.Fenn,M.Ferguson,B.Gurler,D.Hannan,G.Hasenauer,C.Hoagland,K.Harber,L.Hoffman,A.Jensen,K.Kasegawa,D.Kamen-Kaye,A.Kamp,A.Kovac, D.McWilliams,G.Martin,G.Mailon,R.Needham,P.Oehser, R.Poland,W.Powell,M.Parsons,A.Small,D.Salter,M.Sherwood,E.Sullivan,H.Schon,R.Schaedle,E.Schofield,E. Teale,J.Vickers,S.Wellman,R.Wheeler,W.Wiedman,P.Williams, & J.Zimmer. I would like particularly to acknowledge the help of R. Epler who sends a steady flow of items for the bulletin. Please keep the secretary informed of new items as they appear or old ones he has missed.

"It would surpass the powers of a well man now-a-days to take up his bed and walk, and I should certainly advise a sick one to lay down his bed and run."--WALDEN.

THE 1971 ANNUAL MEETING. . .

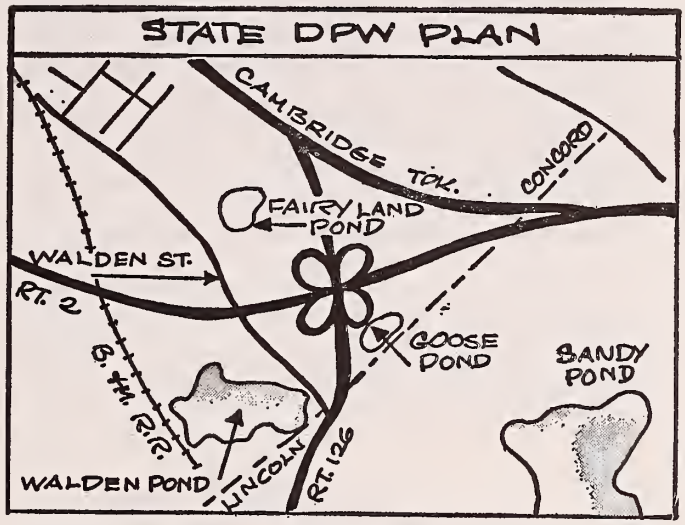
It will be held on Saturday, July 10, in Concord, Mass. Further details will be given in the next bulletin.

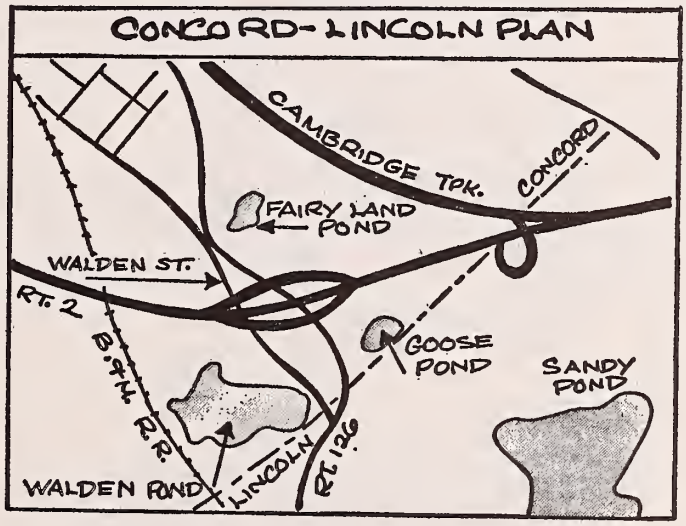
THE 1971 NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

President Albert Bussewitz has appointed the following nominating committee to report at the 1971 annual meeting: Mrs. Edmund Fenn (chairman), Alcott Rd, Concord, Mass.; Rev. Harry Foot, Mason, N.H.; and Prof. H.H.Uhlig, Metallurgy Dept., M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass. Suggestions for nominations may be forwarded to any member of this committee.

WALDEN POND AND ROUTE TWO . . .

Route Two, the major east-west highway in northern Massachusetts crosses Walden Street within a few hundred yards of Walden Pond. For some years now the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has gradually been expanding segments of it into a four-lane dual highway. Plans for thus expanding the Concord-Lincoln segment have recently been activated and the state announced plans for a 90-acre cloverleaf at the Walden Street intersection which would completely engulf Goose Pond and destroy part of the town forest at Fairyland Pond. The towns of Concord and Lincoln have countered with a diamond interchange proposal that would do far less damage to the area. President Bussewitz has reactivated the Save Walden Committee to express the concern of the Thoreau Society members in the matter. The committee consists of Robert Needham,(chairman), Mrs. Caleb Wheeler, Mrs. Loyd Rathbun, Miss Dorothea Harrison, and Mrs. Edmund Fenn, all of Concord, and Roland Robbins of Lincoln. Mr. Needham represented the Save Walden Committee at a meeting of highway and town officials on Dec. 14. Latest word is that the highway department will probably work on the Concord segment for a time--with the hope that a solution can be worked out.





"Misfortunes occur only when a man is false to his own genius....Events, circumstances, etc., have their origin in ourselves. They spring from the seeds which we have sown."
--HDT

TO THE EDITOR:

My reading of Charles W. White's "A Protest Against the Thoreau Society's Annual Meeting" in the fall issue of the Bulletin once again awakened the sense of outrage and frustration it provoked at the Society meeting last July. I could hardly believe that a group so dedicated to Henry David Thoreau would really sit there and refuse to hear, let alone consider, the ideas presented in this protest. Even though most of those present were well past the magic age of thirty, I assumed that as Thoreauvians they would listen to and act on matters which were obviously of concern. Not so!

Unless the Society is to die with the majority of its members, it must attract and keep younger enthusiasts to carry on. But a group so out of tune

with the times has little chance of doing this. I think it's time that the quaint little Saturday morning meeting be made into a forum for dealing with the vital issues, certainly Thoreau's most valuable aspect for us today. As White stated, Thoreau saw Nature as a vehicle, not an end in itself. Let's use the once a year morning meeting to deal more with moral issues and save the Nature activities for the afternoon which is already consumed with them. "New Business" becomes a farce if one is allowed to present only that which was approved by the Board the night before at a meeting attended by a select few. It's enough that the Board is composed of a controlling clique which remains substantially the same year after year. They should at least give the rest of the members a chance to be heard through "new business." I can't see Henry being so concerned about going to lunch at 12:00 sharp that he couldn't listen to ideas as important as those of Charles White.

Elaine Shaw
6 Eagle Street
Rochester, New York 14608

"As long as a man stands in his own way, everything seems to be in his way, governments, society, and even the sun and moon and stars..."
--HDT

MORE DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS ON THOREAU.

With the permission of the University of Microfilms of Ann Arbor, Mich., we continue printing herewith reproductions of abstracts of dissertations on Thoreau. The full dissertations are available from University Microfilms at the prices given at the ends of the abstracts:

STUDIES IN THOREAU'S READING OF ENGLISH POETRY AND PROSE, 1340-1660.

(Order No. 65-7547)

Anne Whaling, Ph.D.
Yale University, 1946

The problems considered in this study grow out of the existence of a long-established critical tradition: the belief, held in some form for a century, that Thoreau's reading in English poetry and prose from Chaucer to Dryden was unusually extensive, and that his understanding of the seventeenth century in particular was profound. It followed that to some extent never clearly defined this reading was of significance for his work, but there was no agreement concerning the influences and comment was limited to the pointing out of trivial borrowings on the one hand or the most general resemblances on the other, with parenthetical recognition from time to time of Thoreau's very great distance from the seventeenth century. The confusion prevailing throughout this comment and the absence of any conspicuous and apparent individual influences suggested, therefore, the usefulness of basic exploratory studies of two aspects of the problem.

The first study, a survey of the records of Thoreau's reading, is primarily historical. With the manuscript commonplace books and the published journal as a basis, an effort is made to determine the amount of the reading, the order in which it was done and the immediate circumstances surrounding it, with suggestions concerning the historical context in which it should be placed. On examination the traditional boyhood and college reading in obscure seventeenth century favorites proves to be legend, while almost all of the reading in sixteenth and seventeenth century materials is found to be limited to the years from 1837 to 1843 and to the period from December, 1841, to October, 1843, in particular. During these years Thoreau accumulated the extracts used later in the completed writings, and while he continued to use his notebooks, there is every reason to believe that after October, 1843, the reading of early work was limited to the writings of naturalists, explorers and historians, consulted for the most part in preparation for other work. What can be seen of the historical context, which includes the Elizabethan revival and Emerson's reading, suggests that Thoreau's reading was much more nearly a systematic exploration of his cultural heritage as part of his general education that it was the pursuit of a special interest in which he was, critically, somewhat ahead of his time.

The second part of the study is a brief discussion of some of the critical issues, and of the conclusions that may reasonably be drawn from evidence such as that presented in Part I. The factors contributing to the growth of the tradition seem to be largely the confusion in the early biographical testimony, the absence hitherto of the most important of the manuscript commonplace books (C, in Appendix A) and incomplete information concerning one of the others, the effect produced by Thoreau's use of quotations, and in particular the perception of general resemblances where there is no basis for assuming a relation of cause and effect. It is suggested that the measure of the significance of the reading should be the degree of Thoreau's interest and the adequacy of his reading as revealed in his comment, and that in cases in which neither can be shown, as in the familiar comparison with the metaphysicals, the parallel should be regarded as merely descriptive. Finally there are a few suggestions concerning important interests revealed in the survey, notably the concern with language.

The primary source material for the study is the series of manuscript commonplace books listed and described in Appendix A. Other appendices contain notes on a manuscript reading list, library borrowing records and lyceum records which prove useful as supplementary material.

M $3.10; X $10.80. 239 pages.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU IN GERMAN CRITICISM: 1881-1965.
[Portions of Text in German].

(Order No. 68-13,127)

James Francis Lacey, Ph.D.
New York University, 1968

Adviser: William M. Gibson

Significant German comment and scholarly work on Thoreau include two brief monographs, four doctoral dissertations, a great variety of essays and translations, and a number of recent articles in learned journals and literary reviews. The first translation of Walden was a German one, and from 1897 to 1961 six separate translations of Thoreau's masterpiece were made available to the German reading public. German literary historians, scholars, translators, and publishing houses have clearly responded to the writings of Henry David Thoreau.

This response, as Eugene Timpe indicates, is most evident in two separate periods. In the first, extending from about 1890 to 1910, Thoreau's reputation was established by literary polemicists like Karl Knortz. Studies in this period characterize Thoreau as a Yankee Diogenes, a latter-day Francis of Assisi, and an advocate of the romantic back-to-nature cult. After a gap of some three decades in which relatively little was written about Thoreau in Germany, Thoreau scholarship revived after World War II. In this revival, which was part of a general enthusiasm for American life and literature in post-war Germany, Thoreau is frequently characterized as an individualist who opposed the tyranny of the majority and the power of the state. German criticism from the beginning has emphasized Thoreau's political and social ideas, a fact which may account to some extent for the decline of Thoreau criticism between the two world wars.

German criticism of Thoreau was initially highly partisan and impressionistic. Liberal thinkers like Karl Knortz and Karl Federn used Thoreau as ammunition in political, social, and theological controversies. These commentators emphasized Thoreau's abolitionist activities, his attack upon technology, and his civil disobedience. A. Prinzinger, the first critic to stress Thoreau's Rousseauistic primitivism, emphasized the Walden sojourn and Thoreau's trips, particularly those to the Maine woods.

Emma Emmerich, a commentator entirely in sympathy with Thoreau's way of life, his personality, and his prose style, provided the reading public with accurate translations of Walden (1897) and selections from Thoreau's journal (1900) at a time when German interest in Thoreau had gained momentum.

German dissertations include an early discussion of Thoreau's relation to Oriental thought (1902) and post-war studies of Thoreau's style and his social thought. The recent revival of German interest in Thoreau defined his position in Western intellectual history, related his writings to German authors like Adalbert Stifter and Ernst Wiechert, and again enthusiastically called attention to the political and social import of Walden and "Civil Disobedience." In 1951 Fritz Krökel provided readers with an important anthology of selections from Thoreau, many of them previously unavailable in

German.

The main stream of German criticism has emphasized the significance of Thoreau's ideas and his continuing relevance as a critic of society and the state. The life and words of Thoreau have assured German intellectuals that Americans are capable of idealism and individualism in deed as well as opinion. Microfilm $3.00; Xerography $8.40. 182 pages.

THE WILD APPLE TREE: POSSIBILITIES OF THE SELF IN THOREAU.

(Order No. 67-6687)

Leonard Nick Neufeldt, Ph.D.
University of Illinois, 1966

The view of Thoreau presented in this essay covers individual prose works, the sequence of these works in an evolving biographical framework, and the intimate relation of the prose works to Thoreau's consciousness. Whether art or life has priority is beside the point. I am interested in a life that was lived, but the living of which was expressed in art. Thoreau was both an artist and a conscious builder of his life--and an artist primarily to this end. His writing consistently was an attempt to give what he often called "being" artistic form. And writing was a primary strategy for expanding his life or "being." Hence I have sought to know Thoreau principally through his writings. Thoreau is dead; only the life which he committed to writing lives.

My approach, therefore, is largely intrinsic. I take seriously Thoreau's warning that not the facts of his life, but his disposition and response to them constitute his true history. Because I have endeavored to convey a sense of the dynamic quality of his life as he, the subject of that life, participated in it and, always, as he invested it in art, the facts about his life are relevant insofar as they help to illuminate the inner life.

The essay is organized around this perception. The first chapter analyzes what Thoreau considered to be the real issue of his life--the soul in circumstances. The individual, Thoreau asserted, inexorably finds himself in circumstances. The nature of his life, however, depends on the degree to which he asserts "his free agency." More important than circumstances is the self and its impressive strategies, resources, energies, which Thoreau called the soul. The continual experiential reaffirmation of such a reservoir of personal initiative lay behind Thoreau's belief that the self need not only arrange a truce with its world, but again and again can transcend its circumstances and surpass its former mode of living and limited self-awareness. The second chapter discusses the first crucial period of his adult life, spanning several years, and culminating in the writing of "Natural History Of Massachusetts." Chapter III deals with the expansive Walden years, particularly as they have been memoralized in A Week On The Concord And Merrimack Rivers. Chapter IV concentrates on the years of revising Walden for publication. The final chapter is devoted to his last years, in which "Autumnal Tints," "A Plea for Captain John Brown" and "Wild Apples" are used to illuminate the culmination of his life. Plotting these four points in his life and in each case focusing on the personal drama as it is disclosed in major prose works of that period make it possible not only to get a sense of the overall shape his "living" took, but also to learn of his growth and ripening.

In his most crucial moments Thoreau had the capacity to demonstrate emphatically that he did not need to exist fearfully, passively, or helplessly conditioned, between his past and present, but could live on the brink of the future, in the state of becoming, compelled by his aspirations and awareness of personal strategies. In so doing, he made Emerson's proclamation, "Who can set bounds to the possibilities of man," flower into a truth of his own life.

Microfilm $3.00; Xerography $10.35. 227 pages.

NOTES AND QUERIES . . . .

Theodore Reik, the psychoanalyst is said to have commented on Thoreau on one of his early books. Can anyone inform the secretary precisely where?

Our thanks to the members who, in answer to our query in the last bulletin, pointed out that Thoreau's "trout in the milk" statement on circumstantial evidence is in his JOURNAL for Nov. 11, 1850 (II,94) and that the incorrect citation for it is given in both the current edition of Bartlett's FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS (Little,Brown) and the brand new INTERNATIONAL THESAURUS OF QUOTATIONS (Crowell).

Robert Ganley (Hancock,N.H. 03449) would like to buy or swap for one of the statuettes of Thoreau made by Robert Wild some years ago. Anyone have one available?

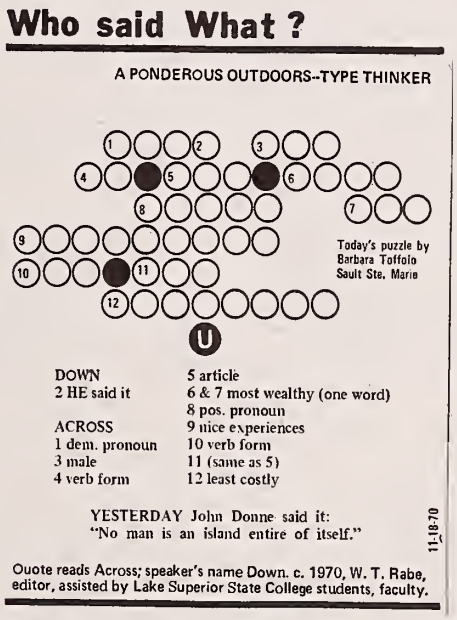
One of the 1970 CORE Christmas cards features Thoreau's different drummer quotation.

Pierce College in California recently exhibited the Thoreau family tea caddy in their library.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED (Nov. 16,1970) announced "Conservationists will be shocked to hear that Thoreau devastated Many Farms. Or maybe not. Thoreau is a town in New Mexico, and all that happened is its high school beat a high school from Many Farms, Ariz."

A new magazine to be devoted to jazz will be entitled DIFFERENT DRUMMER. (Sample copies will be available from P.O.Box 2706, Rochester, N.Y. 14626). And a new anti-pollution magazine also takes its title from Thoreau: MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT (P.O.Box 5504, Barrack's Road Station, Charlottesville, Va.)

And here's a Thoreau puzzle from the DETROIT NEWS for Nov. 18, 1970:



Kenneth Harber (98 Lanark Cres., Rochester, N.Y.) has compiled his own 14,000 entry index to Thoreau's JOURNAL. Do any others have similar indexes?

Students of the new experimental Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., recently retraced Thoreau's route on the Concord and Merrimack for an ecological study.

Sam Wellman of Cleveland points out to us that the 1961 Crowell edition of A WEEK reprints the printer's error of the first edition of omitting three lines of text!

The December, 1970, issue of MEDICAL ASPECTS OF HUMAN SEXUALITY (4, 89) features a page of quotations entitled "Thoreau on Sex"

Thoreau posters seem to be the rage of the moment. Portal Publications of Sausalito, Calif., issue two with Eliot Porter photographs illustrating "In wildness is the preservation of the world." Argus Communications of Chicago issue one featuring "Most men lead lives of quiet desperation." And Hallmark Cards of Kansas City, Mo. have one on "Only that day dawns to which we are awake." Hallmark also issues a number of greeting cards with quotations from Thoreau.

At some unknown date, Thoreau's New Bedford friend, Daniel Ricketson, drew this caricature of Thoreau in his personal copy of Walden, which is now in the Houghton Library at Harvard University. The existence of this caricature was not known until just recently, and it was first published in the Harvard Library Bulletin in October, 1967.